



# INDIGENOUS HERITAGE OF THE NAYAK PODU TRIBE: A STUDY OF HISTORY, TRADITIONS, AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

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## Abstract

*The Nayak Podu (Naikpod) tribe is an ancient indigenous community in Telangana, India, with a rich cultural and historical heritage. This article explores their origins, historical migration, religious and social practices, and contemporary challenges. The Nayak Podus trace their ancestry to prehistoric times, with cultural connections to early global tribal communities. Their religious beliefs are deeply rooted in ancestral worship, mythology, and sacred cave sites. Socially, they maintain a structured hierarchy, preserving traditions through storytelling, rituals, and unique customs. However, modern challenges such as loss of land, lack of education, and socio-political marginalization threaten their cultural identity. This study aims to document their legacy, providing insights into their traditional practices, governance, and evolving way of life.*

**Keywords:** *Nayak Podu, Naikpod tribe, Telangana tribes, indigenous culture, tribal history, Padmanayakas, religious practices, social structure, migration, traditional customs, land rights, folk traditions, cultural preservation.*

## Introduction

The Nayak Podu (Naikpod) tribe is one of the oldest indigenous tribal groups in Telangana, India. They have a rich history, tracing their origins to prehistoric times, and possess a unique cultural heritage that includes distinct traditions, rituals, and social customs. This article provides an in-depth exploration of their history, migration, religious practices, social structure, and lifestyle.

## Historical Background

The Nayak Podus are believed to have migrated to Telangana around 5,150 years ago. They have strong connections to ancient traditions, including worshipping prehistoric cave paintings, such as those in the Chittarayya Caves, Tati Mattaiah Cave, and Gandhari Qilla Caves. Their cultural elements share similarities with ancient African and Bhutanese tribes, suggesting early global tribal connections.

There are multiple theories regarding their origin. Some believe they are descendants of the Padmanayakas, military leaders in the Kakatiya dynasty. Others suggest they are linked to the Mahapadmananda dynasty of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Historical inscriptions and texts indicate that the Padmanayakas ruled between the Krishna and Godavari rivers from 1361–1475 CE, contributing significantly to literature and culture. After the fall of the Kakatiya dynasty in

1323 AD, these warriors continued to play a crucial role in the defense and administration of the region under different rulers.

### **Religious and Cultural Practices**

Two Pujari (Priest) families who depend on the Sambhavan (grain, money) given by the Naikpods are still in Neredupalli near Bhupalapalli. They sing Korrajula story, Padmanayaka story, Karna's wedding etc. with the help of patam (pictures). It is said that Nayakpols originated from Korrajs. Korrajs means Pandavas. Most importantly, it is said that Pandava Madhyamuda Bhima, Pandava's mother Kunti (Gontemma) taught the leaders how to grow sticks, samas and paddy (agriculture). The forms of Korrajus worshiped by them are rounded heads and bundles of peacocks representing the body under the head. Similar figures are also found in Tatimattaya cave appear According to an estimate about 5,150 years ago, the Pandavas migrated to the Telangana region. Then they sing songs that Bhima married Hidimo (Ilanambi), a girl of Nayakpola, and begat Ghatotkachunni.. They worship such wooden idols. Gontemma, the mother of the Pandavas, is worshiped in a cave called Gontemma Kollu near Mahadevapur. Gontemma yaras also worship a female goddess/mother at Gandharikilla named after Gandhari. As one of the Gonthe temples is located in Aihol in Karnataka, it can be said that their roots have extended there. Gonthe and Gandhari (Peddamma) Janapadas were compiled by Andra Seshagiri Rao and Biruduraju Rama Raju.

While the earlier historical and folk sources are like this, some writers say that the full name of the Nayaks was Padmanayakulu, and that they were the descendants of Mahapadmanand who ruled India from the capital of Pataliputra in the 4th century BC. But it can be said that there is no clear evidence that this is a historical truth.

There is clear literary and legislative evidence that the Padmanayakus have been alive in Telangana since 800 years ago. According to them, in the beginning of the 13th century, Bhetala Nayaka, the progenitor of the Padmanayakas, was born in the area of Palsamarri next to Mahabubnagar. He joined the army of the then Kakatiya king Ganapathidev as a military leader. His descendants were "Padmanayaku" military leaders who always protected the Kakatiya kingdom and earned the title of 'Kakatiya Rajyasthanacharya'. After the Kakatiyas lost their kingdom in 1323 AD, these Padmanayakus (descendants of Ratchers) ruled Telangana between the Godavari-Krishna Rivers as their capitals between 1361-1475 CE. He ruled for a hundred years and made great contributions in the fields of literature and culture.

The wooden idols of Singama and Anapota, who massacred the enemies and established the kingdom of Padmanayaka, were worn by the leaders on their faces(enemy) are played during the festivities. Those kings are still called Singaboyudu and Poturaju by Nayakpols. Anapotharaja, wearing the title 'Prati Ganda Bhairava', carved sculptures of the figure in front of the fort gates of the Padmanayaka kingdom. He wrote the inscriptions there. His tradition was followed by his descendants. Bhairava sculpture can be seen in front of every gate of Gandhari Qilla as proof of this. In Gandhari Qilla, one can see the idols of Hanuman and Thiruvani carved by Peddiraja Anantaraju in 1403 AD for Raghunayakula and the

corresponding stone inscription. The history of Padmanayaka kingdom should be studied separately in the background of about 50 such inscriptions and texts.

The clear coordinating point here is that AD. After 1475 some Padmanayakas migrated to other states and came into circulation under other names (Nayaka, Naykara). Those who saved some money became Velamas in the Telugu country and those who fled into the forests became Nayaka tribes. Inscriptions show that some of the forts, especially Rachakonda and Devarakonda, remained followers of the Qutubshahi kings of Golconda. Thus we find inscriptions dated AD 1550 at Koil Konda (Mahabubnagar District) and Rachakonda. These indicate that the Mannavars (another name for tribal leaders) supported Ibrahim Qutbshah as king. (It is noteworthy that like Nayakpols, we also worship Lakshmi Devara). There are also mentions in 'Siddheshwar Charitra' that such mannelu, boyas or manne boyas used to put pallas on enums (wild bulls) and came to Orugallu on them and declared their allegiance to the king there.

Subsequently, during the 16th-19th centuries, the Nayakpols and Manneboyas exercised some authority as mandal chiefs, especially in the forest areas, as followers of the chief kings throughout Telangana, and contemporary inscriptions and literature reveal. In the 20th century, the then Nizam government recognized the Nayakpols as one of the 9 tribal tribes in the Hyderabad state. This was the situation till the time of framing of the Constitution of India in 1950. After that, these leaders were shown together in the Gond tribes.

### **Social Structure**

The Nayaka community refers to themselves as Nayakas or Nayakas Pandava Nayakas, Padma Nayakas. Huts of Nayakpola are also quite distant from those of other non-tribals and tribals. The tribe of Nayakapodu formed a sub-tribe or a synonym of the Gond tribe because of its formation amongst the Gonds. Leaders are being discredited in tribal expansion. Although Gonds reside only in Adilabad district, the Nayakapodu tribe has lost social existence since Gonds are listed as Gonds all over the state of Telangana (old Hyderabad). Since somewhere or someone one or two are either studying or cannot join the legislative assemblies or social leadership except till the level of ward members or Sarpanchi. Therefore, the clever tribals and non-tribals are being deceived and falling into their hands.

They consume most of their diet in the form of gatka and ambalini (java) prepared using green sorghum and millet. A little bit of grained i.e. soledu seeds to prepare Ambali is sufficient Ambali for four or five persons. Rolls and rokals are employed to knead this gatka and ambali flour. Isuru stones were employed during the latter period. Rice and curry were cooked using clay pots. They also go by the name ear hooks because of their size and ear-shaped top part to be lowered from the stove top. Paddles are employed for threshing the rice. Shibbi made out of Dusseru vines is utilized in preparing rice porridge. If you dig a hole in the earth and have a fire, it will be tampiti, in a pot like a manger If burned, it is called Kumpati. Pots were used for fresh water. Rice was also consumed in mud mounds. Brass bowls, goblets and glasses were described to be great if they had each in the house. The use of earthen pots was about thirty years ago. Ranu Ranu sattu bowls (aluminum) are utilized.

Nayakpods primarily consume tubers (tubers). Kunchekalam lumps, Koteggalls, Alli lumps, Tindudu lumps and Boda lumps in the ponds and large lagoons are consumed. Govinda Gadda, Uleka Gadda, Elleru Gadda, Musalamma Gadda, Vertical Gadda and Chenna Gadda occurring in the forest are excavated with gaske sticks or Kohega-stick-carved sticks and boiled and consumed. Poisonous white chenna tuber and black chenna tuber are also yielded by the tubers. Toxic chennagadda along with maddikaram (ash of mud) is boiled overnight and stored in a jallibutta in the flowing water of streams from morning until evening and consumed. If they are not seasoned or soaked in water, legs, hands and face of the consumers become swollen. Legs and arms of some people get separated and remain inactive for a long period of time. As an antidote to the poison of chenna gaddas, they used to boil a thick mixture of black pepper soup. Slowly over a period of time, the toxic effect went away and became normal.

### **Other tribes and castes**

The Nayakpods are a South Indian tribe particularly from pre-independence Hyderabad current Telangana area. They reside mainly in forests on either side along Godavari banks and others in plains. Nayakpods' places of residence are in Adilabad district where Gondu, Kolam and Thoti Gude co-reside. Koya and Nayaka pods are found in tightly gathered groups near Gudelu in Karimnagar and Warangal districts. As observed in the same Khammam district, Koya, Nayakapodu and Kondareddy goodes get mixed.

The territory of these people who are in the agency villages is given some protection under the 1/70 Act. But nowadays the Nayakpods who are in the plains villages are cursed.

The reason being that the villages in which they reside are first filled with leaders. But as the Gonds were brought under the category of tribal tribes published in 1950, the government administrators concentrated on the identity of the Gonds. Therefore, the Tribal Areas Regulation published in 1949 did not direct the attention of the chieftains towards the land protection legislations extended to the tribals. Due to this, there was more migration of non-tribals into the homes of the leaders and all the territory fell into non-tribals' hands. After the Tribal Tribes Act of 1950, the 1/70 Act of 20 years later declared them as plains, non-tribal area / non-scheduled area, the increase of non-tribal migration and disruption of the existence of the chiefs caused them to lose their lands and become poor, especially if they are a tribal tribe.

### **The gotras**

The Nayakas' tribal clans are symbols of the secret symbolism that is attached to the shape of water in the rivers which symbolize the regions where their forebears resided. When the Kakatiya Empire came under the possession of the Turks, the rulers who escaped to the surrounding forests found shelter in the Giri Vana Durgas and resisted the Turks under the able leadership of Prolaya Nayaka and established the Padma Nayaka kingdom with Rekhapalli as the capital at a location close to Malyavanta Parvata on the Godavari river. After the death of Prolaya Kapaya leader held Orugallu and after the death of Itani Padma Nayaka governed the kingdoms under the command of Singaboyu with Rachakonda as the headquarters. During that



time, they appear to have employed Maruga (secret) language to conceal their presence from the enemy in fighting against the Turks.

There are two gotrams in Nayakpola: 1. Palakaya 2, Nallella, the existence of these two gotrams is also connected with the color of water. A maruga (secret) mark of the people of the Godavari and Krishna river banks.

**Palakaya Gothram:** Just as Godavari river coast symbolizes water in the Godavari river, Palakaya symbolizes water inside the coconut which is as transparent as the water below water.

**Nallella Gotra :** Nallella Gotra is also referred to as Nalla Nilla Gotra

A long-time leader is recognized through the sayings of older people. Krishna River is also referred to as Nalla River. Its bed is covered with black silt and its water is black in color. Besides, regarding the cheaters and the flee-fleers, it is being said that Kishtaki (Krishna River) possesses seventy piers in every pier, and he cannot elude us, meaning that the existence of ancestors of Nayakpols also remained on Krishna River's banks.

Another similarity between the Nayakpols is that they have two primary divisions, Ubida Dari and Tiruvana Dari. Ubida Dari are of Palakaya Gotra, Thiruvanadari are of Nallella Gotra, Ubida Dari are Shaivites and practice Vibhudi Dharana. They are Chandra Vamsa by claim. Thiruvananthapuram are Vaishnavites and employ the three nama bhottu, who are Surya Vamsa by claim. This thread is evident in cases of marriage and death.

There are hundreds of family surnames of the Nayakapodu tribe according to district. Only a few (220) have been listed here as much as we have gathered from the elders.

### **Names of houses**

#### **Adilabad District (Formerly)**

Mud, Rodda, Palla, Gundam, Kuna, Kolakani, Muchaneni, Edula, Chedam, Sandra, Jaka, Ganta, Meshineni, Navasandula, Muta, Chedam, Komula, Puli, Ganji, Devara, Nara, Ghor, Barla, Sandra, Bontha, Sara, Macha, Sunkari, Kommula.

#### **Nizamabad District (Formerly)**

Mutta, Mettu, Ganta, Burugula, Burra, Kodapa, Kuncham, Macha, Putta, Gandla, Ratam, Bandari, Mekkala, Pandula, Pasala, Konki, Rajula, Chevula.

#### **Kariminagar District (Formerly)**

Pittala, Bisula, Pandi, Baddi, Ganga, Gunti, Mekkala, Bellam Konda, Gade, Gottam, Kolakani, Bachala.

#### **Warangal District (Formerly)**



Avula, Kota, Edula, Biori, Kuna, Anumula, Peddi, Palem, Singam, Morri, Cherra, Ganta, Pasam, Boddu, Pasala, Kotha, Kopula, Akula, Reddy, Lotti, Belam, Pittala, Gampa, Gade, Sunkari, Belamma Konda, Nagula.

### **Khammam District (Formerly)**

Bathini, Gaddam, Nallabothula, Golla, Chillaka, Kinnera, Ganta, Boddu, Kankatti, Dabba, Somini, Nallabothula, Pujari, Nalli, Pittala, Ravula, Puchi, Baddi, Buddha, Bias, Koppula, Bogi, Gaddam, Kinnera, Puchi.

The above family names are mainly found in Nakapola.

### **The families**

The family is the core of the Nayakapoda social structure. Individual families are prevalent and joint families are scarce. Within a few years of marriage, they move out of the joint family and create their own family. The responsibility of maintaining and owning the family rests on both the husband and the wife, based on the difference between men and women. Women cook, clean homes, care for children, harvest beets in the forest and fish with men. They accompany the husband in all the farming activities by carrying the saddles. The father is accepted as the head of the family. In work and other economic matters, all the members of the family obey the father. In fatherless families, the mother is accepted as the head of the family. Others of the caste also visit them according to need. Uncle is shown good respect in the family.

### **Customs from birth**

#### **The birth**

The Nayakpods celebrate the birth of a child in their home as if their dead ancestors came back to life. One side of the house is tied with a mat and kept isolated while the mother is giving birth. Aure, gara mandal which is brought from forest to prevent seeing ghosts and ghosts is kept at the entrance of the house. Bathing from birth till 11 days is referred to as 5 quarters. The 11th day is referred to as coming to kundla. When small children are taken ill with fever, it is because of the antics of the dead elders, so that they gauge themselves to shield their children from cold, they cut a dead chicken and then plant it in water. Even today, they carry out the rituals of their ancestors when a child is born. The birth of a child within the home is regarded as an unheard-of occurrence. With the arrival of a child, the inhabitants of the house were joyful and likened the child born out of the young to the old to one of their forebears.

You will be sad remembering what you have. Since the time of the birth of the child, there is joy in that house. From prior to the birth of the child until it is laid in the udyas (barasala) the thread is as under. Even before the birth of the child, the woman is confined to a special arra (room). She is attended to by her elderly grandmother and grandmother. By the time Purudu comes, she will inform her parents, elder sisters and close relatives. When bandu set off from the home, they bring some money, sticks or sorghum that they find to carry around with them wrapped up in pieces of cloth.



At the very birth of the child, housemen proceed towards the village and get Are Manda and Garamanda and keep it above the doorsteps. Sorghum, Maize and two or three sticks of firewood are planted with a stick or a piece of wood. They hope that this will shield the mother and children from seeing ghosts and ghosts. Once the child is born, the umbilical cord is severed and sorghum or any other cereal is dropped into the mat, saffron is set aside and the child is placed to sleep. They believe that if this is done, the kids will grow up and live without ever experiencing food scarcity. The cereal dropped into the chata is handed over to the midwife who drops the pus. Previously Talantu seed powder used to bathe the mother and children. Today, in recent times, usage of this flour is different and they are adopting pesars, minums and sugarcane flour.

Up to this time, Nayakpods even have their own way of giving a bath to a pregnant woman. Mix the nepaku along with salt and turmeric powder and grind as a paste. Take a hot water bath where the leaves of Vavila are boiled. When bathing, the Addapapa cloth is put on from the right shoulder to the left arm, and after the bath, it is taken off and concealed and returned when bathing. Bathing is referred to as five (5) quarters. The third day from the time of birth is referred to as three quarters and referred to as 1st quarter, five days-2nd, seven days-3rd, nine days-4th and eleven days-5<sup>th</sup>. 5<sup>th</sup> for bath They bring boiling water from all the houses in the house and pour a bowlful of blue-colored water over the mother and children and take bath and have their meal in the house. This day it is taken into the house from the room where they pour the pus. The eleventh day is called coming into the pot. The baby's mother (infant up to three months) is given yellow pepper rice. Castor oil for mother and child is boiled by mixing Vavintii, Veeru and Utreni.

The mother and child remain in their own home with family members until the twentieth day. The ceremony of giving the baby Uyyas (Barasala) is done on this day in Gudem. Children and mothers are welcomed with new attire, covered with tight wraps, and covered with new attire. Adawals arrive and eat from door to door in Gudem. If the mother and children visit anybody for the first time after Barasal, a gift of grain, velipayas, asafoetida and vamu is presented with a bamboo basket. The superstition of this tribe is that the rats will chew and ruin the food and clothing of the family if they don't provide it.

In Nayakapodu tribals, the maternal uncle's duty builds up from the moment the child is born. In addition to mother and father, uncle also carefully watches everything. That's why. It is said that even if the mother passes away, the uncle will not survive.

When Goggipallugani arrives, they cover the uncle with a tundu (scarf) and kick the child in the face with the left foot of the uncle. In the event that the intestine gets delivered around the child's neck, it will not be damaged by the devil forces. If the child is born with opposite calls, the midwife will be injured and the midwife will be strangled to death without anyone being allowed to see the child at birth. The belief of this tribe is that if a child with anti-calls survives, dead, ghosts, ghosts and treasures and earth deposits will be visible to this child. They also feel that thunderbolts descend on them during rains.

## **Ravesra**

Girl child's menstruation in their vocabulary is known as Ravesra or being a gentleman. When the house is large, they sit in an angle room or if the house is small, palm leaves are laid out in one angle. These palm leaves are taken by my uncle. The ones who do not have uncles are brought along with the ones in the maternal line. All the elderly women of the caste in Gudem will say in a whisper that the girl in that house is a gentleman. On that day, after returning from work, all the women bring dal, jaggery and Nanuba rice (soaked rice) when they return from their homes.

They take all the girls to the bathroom with a veil so that they cannot see her face and immerse her in a bath filled with yellow color paint. Having bathed, covering the head to the foot with a mask, bringing it inside the house, combing the head, applying bottu and sandalwood and putting on akshintas. The dal, the jaggery and the Nanuba rice which is carried from home is set in front of the girl and everybody consumes a bit and departs for home. Fresh new clothes are bound on and flowers are tied around them, along with offering dry coconut balls on the 11th day. The Akshinthas are placed later on and Mangalaharati is chanted. For 11 days one has to be veiled so that they are not visible to others. In the early times, women alone were permitted to have meals. These bojanas were also referred to as Atla Balli.

### **Manu / Marriage**

Nayakapods have their ancestry through family names from the ancient times. Tribals of Nayakapodu are Nallella / Nallani/ Nallanilla and Palakaya. Nayakapodu tribe has six kinds of marriages. A married daughter and a married son marry if they are related. Two wives are permitted by elders. Marriage is a tradition from ancient times which is celebrated at the house of the married son. Here, the mother and father are the heads of the clan The father's family name is principally numbered and relations are decided by the surnames of the sitting family Menarikam or distant castes on taking viyya with children of mother's brother or father's elder sister is nathirukam. Their marriages are conducted at the bridegroom's home. In addition to the work of the Pellinti, all the caste members come and bring canopies, belugas, baditelas, and canopies from the hills on the orders of the head of the caste. The firewood is hauled from Adivi on dry carts. The old roof is removed and a new roof is put on the house. Thus, when the work of the family is finished, dinner is consumed in the evening. Yellow was written on the white thread and yellow horn was used as a tali in older weddings. Worn around the neck pierced by black beads Marked as a married woman. This is an act that is derived from ancestors. 1) Recipe of pot exchange. 2) Menu of height. 3) Sukamanchi 4) Illarikam 5) Abduction and marriage (forced marriage). 6) Maru Manu.

### **Pot exchange recipe**

These marriages are typically conducted in a love-filled location. Earlier, if the younger brothers were extremely young, they used to give the children of the elder sisters to their uncles and marry them. Mother- and father-supported brothers and sisters join the children with the brother-in-law line. Also, even if they are not accepted by the mother and father, the generation prior to their (pali vullu) grandfather is also accepted and accepted in this kind of marriage. Specifically, a child of a house (daughter of the bride) is transferred to the child of the first

giver of the house (son of the bride). In this kind of relationship, the milk bearers accept and take them in their name of blue. Fathers and children born to the same grandfather are Pali Vals and those belonging to the same family name are Nilla Vals. The opposite side is provided in this kind of marriage. The pot is therefore referred to as transplanting manu.

### **Height manu**

In this kind of marriage, if the girl, the boy's edu couple and the color forms are desired, the long-term celibacy automatically implies that they are familiar to others in the caste, though they have no prior acquaintance with their family. The bridegroom's son only incurs the expense of the bridegroom, while others or two others incur half of the cost based on their affordability.

### **Suka is good**

This kind of marriage is even prevalent here and there in the houses of leaders. In this kind of marriage, the man groom has to incur the complete expense. The son of the bridegroom arrives with oil, dal, rice, sorghum or clothes for the daughter of the bride and presents it to the whole village, takes the consent of the clan head and then arranges a feast and marries the girl. This marriage is also referred to as the wedding of Iddam rice and pulses.

### **Homely**

House marriages are not common. In a house where no girl child or boy child lives, even though there is ample property, it will get wasted, so they prefer to keep housemaid for safeguarding the property. In certain places, even if there are boys living in the house of the girl, even though they are tiny, or disabled, blind, or defective in some way, this kind of marriage is done. If there are boys in that house, give the house equal to them to the son-in-law of the house. Parents like to send those who come from home only if they have two or three sisters and brothers with them. After the girl and boy's parents discuss, the boy is sent to the girl's house. From that day all the work concerning that house was done. Make sure to do so. Illarika's son-in-law has to live the rest of his life with his in-laws. All these are done under the guidance of elders.

### **Forced marriage**

**Child marriage:** It is most prevalent among this type of marriage. It used to occur during previous days. Such things are accepted as caste tradition. A boy collects a girl because he likes a girl and the girl's parents disagree. Besides, even if her parents refused to sell their daughter-in-law, even if my brother-in-law fetched her while everyone was around, no one could prevent her. Everyone in this tribe believes that if a girl is given birth to by the elder sister, the nephews will be as strong. Goodem accepts the elders' advice and assistance of the youth during this compulsory lifting. But for them to perform Kapuram, they must struggle against the wrong caste. Then he washes his hands before everyone in front of the elders. At times when another wedding is performed, the boy puts on the headscarf on his beloved girl even if there is no relationship. Since the caste is wearing the scarf in front of everybody, nobody would like to do that girl. For wearing a scarf like this one, the boy will be heavily clothed and bonded to him. All members of the Dandaga Sommu caste feast.

A ritual takes place in weddings. Pots If they are wedded, they will certainly bring unwoven pots. These Avirenu pots are two or three-sized arrows. They also carry vajja parpals, pollu munthals and garige buds. These are carried from the potter's home with clappers. It is offered to them when brothers and sisters are parted. These are utilized for pouring grain. New grains are poured at the wedding close to these Avireni pots and they are watered by the daughter-in-law daily until they sprout. A vallewatu with a long scarf is a must for the married son. The vallewatu scarf is folded under the hollows on the back from the armpits and put upon the right shoulder at the end of the left thigh and upon the left shoulder at the end of the right thigh. It appears similar to Raja Thivi decoration. The sixteenth festival is celebrated and the sprouts are carried to Mutyalamma and thrown into wells. It is their belief that when they do this, grain will be present in their Avireni pots forever.

### **Death**

If one dies in this tribe, all the individuals in Gudem are sad that they have lost a member of their family. Married individuals are carried on a pyre and burned using firewood. Unmarried individuals are taken on one stick and bound. They used to carry them along with their clothes and burn them. Now they are doing such things as purchasing new clothes. The ones at home light the lamp. The ones who go for cremation will surely go to the house of the dead and place the wreath on the pyre. On the third day a chicken is killed and jiva ganji is sprinkled on the dead. Goes to Satani / Jangam to ask if they can do Kalsi Dina rituals with the caste head. If they are Ubiddala (Vibudi Darala) they do rituals with Jangam and if they belong to Thiruvana (Three Names) Dalala they do rituals with Satani. Normally Thiruvandars carry the ashes to the cremation ground on the 11th day by preparing a tirupelle of mud and adding it to jaladi (water). Vibudi Darulas are beaten and do rituals. Daily (ritual) food is then offered in Gudem.

### **Clothing**

Men among the leaders have a panche and a head handkerchief. They sit on the barivanti (Baribata). In the past, the elders used to work and when they went to the hills, they used to remain on the gochi. When going to work in Vuri, Bujana used to wear a scarf. If they were working on panche, they used to shower cash on panche. These clothes were also used, and there were not many except two pairs.

For women, elders used to knot sarees. Ties were knotted above. Short skirts up to the knees (half skirts) and pulling skirts up to the feet used to be worn by small children. Girls of marrying age used to gather the cloth of their mother's sarees and knot them.

According to the times: Nowadays, only the seniors are sporting handkerchiefs. Younger men wear pants, young children wear neckerchiefs, shirts, wearing Elderly women are tying sarees and preparing Gochi. Young women are cleaning the bolechira or Golsadi up to the feet. Some studying girls from somewhere go to Jama'am and observe the changes, they are wearing nasikaram karidu few chudidar and punjabi dresses. Uneducated girls wear pull skirts and jackets up to the feet.

### **Flag and symbol**

Sun and moon are printed on orange and red cloths and white cloths and hoisted at Illars/Nagurs. In some regions the form of Anjaneyu is painted on triangular flag cloths in red and white. Or if a white flag then a red flag and if a red flag then a figure is sewn with white cloth.

### **Jewelry**

Nayakpadu women wearing jewelry is not much jewelry except centenarians. The reasons are numerous. Traditionally, married (married) girls also never wore gold taliboti, but not jewels. A thread bound with yellow horn was fastened around the neck in weddings in lieu of Bundu. Black beads were threaded onto a string after marriage and used around the neck. If the appearance of black beads strung as a neck band is witnessed, it goes by the term "married woman.". Wearing nose drops was thought to be excellent. Economical people a little, who own herds of cows or women owning slightly more land of cultivation, adorn black bead garlands with four or eight golden aces stuck with black beads and a cord of black beads in the centre, and silver kadias and garland kadias for the legs. This kind of scenario was observed even up to last three decades. Slowly slowly changes are occurring now.

### **The bite**

A thick cloth wick is inserted in the lamp with cooking castor oil and the lamp is made adhere to lamp soot. Soot After shaking it well, they used to grind it and mix some castor oil in it and keep it. The agar blob fed to small kids was fired in a pot shell until it was black, then placed in roti, boiled in a small amount of water, pounded into a coconut shell and kept and administered to the children. Currently, everyone is employing bottu and katukala available in the kotta.

### **Tattoo**

In the older times, when wands of the Korrajs arrived at the homes of the leaders, they were offered green sorghum or maize and tattooed. Men had emeralds on their wrists, lower forearms and wrists. Women used to put it on the cheeks like a blob on the forehead, on little kids and on the chin. Up until around 40 years ago, it was alright to get a tattoo. But since then it has gradually waned out of interest.

### **Controversies**

A decent self is a basis of decency, faith and trust. the name of Fighting with others. Quarrels in the family are settled by the word of the father. If the quarrels persist, the father's side and the mother's side intervene and end the dispute. If it is not set right by then, the caste elders' intervention is also required. Caste elders and caste rules are given great respect.

### **Inheritance**

Male sons have equal complete rights on the property of their parents. Some additional property is given to the eldest of the sons in Jyesta Bagam. The female daughters (daughters) are married and are sent to the aunts, they are given goats and cows as arnana (dowry). If the father



and mother are deceased, then the female child is escorted by the brothers and sisters. After all the shopping, they go back to their aunt's residence. Though the female child is not accorded the right in property, the said customary right has been followed by the elder members of the Nayaka tribe from time immemorial.

### **Female character**

Second to the father, the father is the senior member of the family. Mother's word is also obeyed in workplace decisions. Women prepare food, wash houses, look after children, dig up beets that occur in the forest, gather flowers, cut tunica and gather forest fruits, but men cut down trees during the season, carry rice bales on their behalf while they plow using chains, and join their husbands in farm work in harvesting and livestock. It also assists in cooking and cooking. Men dominate in household decisions like money, weddings, etc. Women have no stake in property of the household. Women may not attend gatherings, meetings, worship Devars. Idols/masks of Gods may not be touched. Weaving/cleaning Devarla Naguru/Illari is performed using Kannepillas i.e., children. The foremost reason lies in the fear that on menstruation days for women, evils would occur owing to the anger of the deras. Women are not derogated. Goddurali is not respected. The reason is that she thinks that nobody will succeed in any work.

### **Fun relationships**

Those belonging to the caste are grandfather-grandson. The brother-in-law, brother-in-law, uncle-in-law, brother-in-law etc. play pareshkalas. Mainly proverbs are played with words. Others also take it in a positive way and enjoy.

### **Education-traditional methods**

Barya husbands bring the children along when the Nayakpods are chopping firewood, the vasas, beams, and poraka needed for the house. For adults Learn skills while assisting. Based on the habits and mindset of Adivi animals, how to trace their tracks, when they are normal or threatened by their screams, the female animals are familiar and trailed by the elders. They learn to escape when threatened by wild animals by narrating how their ancestors defended themselves in the past. When the cattle are led out for grazing, they learn where they can get fodder and how to transport it back home. On the other hand, they learn to sense dangers by listening to the sounds and smelling the cattle while grazing. Cattle and birds first perceive dangers and cry or threaten them and turn away or confront the danger upon sensing it.

Earlier they used to create their own farming tools. Nowadays, the quality of tools created by them is not up to expectations and the quality of their usage is poor and the expected yields are not being received. But in farming, the seniors had to learn through observation and how to produce ropes like ropes, ropes, ropes and ropes for Arakas (ploughs) using linen taken from Adiwi and Nulaka for use as beds with Kopera grass.

### **Government or private education**

The Nayakapodu tribe is highly primitive when it comes to education.

The prime reason behind this is the uncertainty about the reservation provided to leaders by the government. The literacy rate of leaders is below one percent. It can be stated that there are no student leaders in tribal ashram schools and hostels. Moreover, they have not been able to afford private education and its cost. Even such people as are developed by the government programs are not more than can be counted on fingers. Because of illiteracy and failing to become social leaders, unawareness of the government's education development schemes. That's the day they spend eating all the time just to survive.

## **Medicine**

### **Natu medicine continues to be practiced in the Nayakapodu tribe.**

The sap, roots and leaves of the tree are used on the stomach and used externally. Healing trees with tree saplings are well known to all adults. The new generation is not that familiar with this medicine and even the trees are hard to find. There are two reasons behind this. One is the lifestyle changes and the other is the abundance of herbal plants which is being lost because of the forest that is vanishing day by day. Polem Mallesh of Bhattupalli of Manthini mandal of Karimnagar district who has experience with this medicine is Ditta in medicine. He also takes care of snake and scorpion stings. City people also approach him to treat women's diseases. He prescribes medicines for asthma diseases, moles etc. His cousins Polampalle (Polamvonipalle) Polam Venkatesh, Laxman and Tirupati of Venkatapuram mandal of Warangal district are practicing as doctors. Besides, Siddini Tirupathaiah and Jamini Nagulu of Mangapet, Mulakalapalli mandal of Khammam district practiced medicine. Both of them passed away recently. Also Rao Sahadeva of Gollagudem, Dammamet mandal, also treats snake and scorpion stings. Pippi bandages Pannu, boils (root disease) and fractures. Veerla Venkateshwarlu of Rekapelli, hitherto in Khammam district and now relocated to East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, is famous in natu medicine. He heals and heals the childless, varibijam, budda, moles, and those who have been struck by blows, and alleviates the pain in the spine during old age and many more.

## **Caste Head - Panchayat**

### **Leaders honor the caste system and live as per the vows.**

Even today, their caste practices have not been upset. A caste gentleman in each house will be The priest, the caste headman and a caste jawan accompany the caste headman. This caste jawan is also referred to as Bantrotu or Manegadu. All members of the caste appoint these three. The priest performs weddings, devars, fairs and kolups as per the orders of the caste headman. The caste jawan invites everyone on all occasions such as marriages, deaths, panchayats, fairs, etc. The caste panchayat is independently managed by every village. Kalsi Panchayat is conducted by all the elderly of other nearby goodes when someone abducts a girl of another goodepu, or in the event of a fight. The danduga decided by the gentlemen in the panchayat has to be worn. If the danduga is not tied, they will not join the weddings and festivals organized in the caste. All of the castes cannot visit kalsi work. Even those who have been banned from the caste, if they don't repair the caste fault, the caste will decrease. This danduga money is divided equally among all the kalsi and drink Sara. If the money is greater,

it is shared equally with all the participating goodes in the panchayat. This practice is referred to as calling the four-year caste.

### **Gathering (meeting)**

He calls the caste jawa with the dictum of the meeting and holds the meeting.

These meetings are conducted close to Devarla Naguru or in the shade of trees. When the fairs/kolupis are organized and the money contributed by each family towards the expense of the kolupis is determined in the name of distribution. When the Vands of the Korrajs who are Addis come to tell the stories of the Pandavas, Kattadi means they assemble everywhere to determine the sense they will attach. They also gather to decide rates of log wages for tunica logging and forest cop (coop) felling. All these gatherings take place at the initiative of the caste head.

### **Conclusion**

The Nayak Podu tribe has a profound historical and cultural significance, rooted in ancient traditions and connections to early civilizations. Their religious beliefs, social customs, and governance systems reflect a unique tribal identity that has persisted despite centuries of external influences. However, modernization and socio-political changes have posed challenges to their survival as a distinct tribal group. The loss of land rights, declining traditional practices, and limited access to education continue to impact their community. Preserving their heritage requires proactive efforts in education, policy support, and cultural documentation to ensure that their identity and traditions are not lost to time. Recognizing their contributions and struggles is essential for their empowerment and integration into contemporary society while maintaining their cultural uniqueness.

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